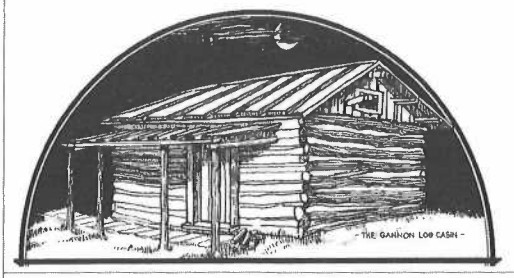
149

The McHenry County Historical Society's QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



Tracer

Summer/Fall 2014

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Upcoming Events

1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 12
Hobo Quilts & Railroads
With author Debra Henninger
at the museum

10 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 6
Christmas Open House
Celebrating the anniversary of Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer
at the museum

1 p.m. Dec. 10
Volunteer Thank You Luncheon
at the museum

7 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 17
The Making of the Rankin/Bass Holiday Classic: Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer with Rankin/Bass historian and biographer **Rick Goldschmidt**
at the museum

1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 28
Antiques Appraisal Day
at the museum

Conservation district working to save history as well as nature

By Kurt Begalka

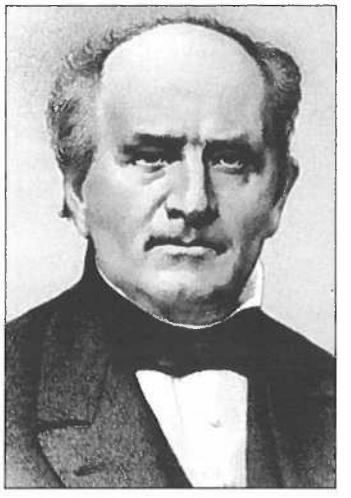
Despite being dealt a severe legislative blow, the McHenry County Conservation District has not lost site of its responsibility to preserve history. McHenry County is poised to landmark the Powers-Walker House, located within Glacial Park Conservation Area.

"Twenty years from now, if it not used for programming and falls into disarray, at least it cannot be demolished without getting a certificate of appropriateness," said Gail Brown,MCCD's database coordinator and volunteer restoration specialist.

"Hopefully someone will come forward and give it a hug."

When Illinois Senate bills 3341 and 3342, sponsored by Sen. Pam Althoff, failed to get out of the House, a potential funding source for historic preservation died with them. The legislation would have allowed the district to ask voters for up to an additional 5 cents per $100 of equalized assessed value to be used for historic preservation and would have enabled it to recapture all of the non-referendum bonding authority it is legally entitled to.

When Rep. Mike Tryon declined to move the bill out of committee, it left MCCD with no viable means of restoring – or even shoring up – a number of turn-of-the-century structures at Camp Algonquin, as well as the



William McConnell

Weidrich barn in Glacial Park or the Kennedy Way Station – an 1850s Greek Revival house near its Brookdale Conservation Area near Woodstock.

But that doesn't mean preservation efforts are dead in the water, just water-logged. It simply takes longer – 19 years in the case of the Powers-Walker House and its pre-Civil War era barn.

The Greek Revival house was built by the Powers family in 1854 and bought by Samuel Walker in 1863. Brown said restoring the house took an estimated 17,000 hours of "sweat equity" by volunteers … so far. While the four downstairs rooms are done, much work remains on the second floor and the barn. The plan is to one day remove the tin/steel panels now covering the wood siding and replace the metal roof with the appropriate wood shake shingles.

And all the while volunteers work to piece clues together in an effort to create an accurate picture of life in the 1840s through 1860s.

"Over 150 years a lot of families have lived here," Brown said. "We keep getting new stories. We keep learning new stuff."

The McConnell farmstead in Richmond is an even larger project. Bought by MCCD in 1999, as part of an effort to protect the north branch of the Nippersink Creek, the proposed "living history" farm is intact except for a pump house and outhouse. "And we have those at Glacial Park on the Weidrich farm," Brown said.

The 9-acre farm boasts all of the perfunctory outbuildings, including a chicken coop, hog house, milk house, hired-hands house, wooden corn crib, two cement silos, grainery, a massive three-bay threshing barn that features 16-inch, hand-hewn oak beams and a transverse frame barn with a 40-stall dairy barn below. The farm, which likely eclipsed 1,000 acres and stretched to the state line down to what is now Glacial Park, later shrunk to 200 acres. Acquisitions to what is now the North Branch Conservation Area reclaimed much of the land.

(Continued on page 2)

The Tracer is a quarterly publication carrying local history topics, news and information for members of the McHenry County Historical Society.

Our museum is located south of Route 176 and north of Route 20 at 6422 Main St., Union.

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OFFICE & RESEARCH LIBRARY HOURS

9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday

An appointment is necessary to use the research library. Non-members pay a research fee. Copies are extra.

MUSEUM HOURS

(May 3 through Oct. 5)

1 to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and Sundays

McHenry County Historical Society members enjoy free admission.

Our Mission

Providing the methods and means of presenting McHenry County history to enrich life.

[An Illinois Not-for-profit 501(C)3 Corporation]

WE APPRECIATE OUR MEMBERS.

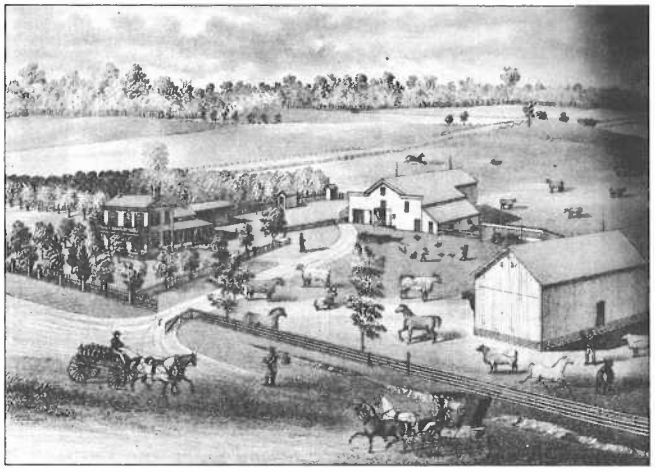

Illustration of the John McConnell farm - 1872 plat book.

"The education department has a real defined look as to what they want to do out there," Brown said. "It's the first property that the district has owned that has that complete of a farm."

A young man traveling west from Pennsylvania, William Alexander McConnell, came upon an intriguing dell near Richmond in 1835. A year later, McConnell and his wife, Elizabeth, settled on land overlooking the north branch of the Nippersink Creek. They built a 16-by-18-foot log cabin and raised three sons – John, A.B. and George.

In 1852 McConnell and his family built a two-story, Greek Revival house on the south side of Broadway Street, across from the log cabin home site. McConnell had become one of the most prominent and wealthy landowners in the county, having served in a number of public posts including township supervisor, associate county judge, county commissioner and state representative. McConnell owned so much land, that he was able to give each of his sons their own, 500-acre farm – complete with livestock, crops, a home, out buildings and enough grain to last an entire year.

In 1872 after giving away the family house and farm on Broadway Street to his son John, McConnell and Elizabeth moved into a new, two-story Greek Revival house across the street at the location where the log cabin once stood. This modest clapboard house was far from the palatial estate he could have afforded to build. In fact he recycled the same hand-hewn barn built and dismantled twice during the moves across Broadway Street.

"Having deep pockets doesn't mean you have to be showy," Brown said.

John Kremer, the district's operations and public safety director; Brown and host of volunteers began cleaning debris from this last McConnell farm in 2001. New electric wiring has been added, superfluous chimneys and modern porch removed. Old wallpaper is being stripped off ceilings and original walls are being recreated based on a series of subtle clues.

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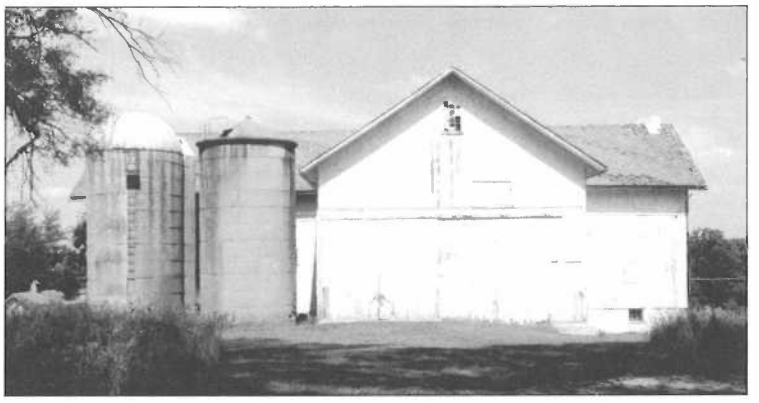

William McConnell built (left) this Greek Revival house in 1872 on Broadway Street in Richmond. It features a two-story transverse dairy barn (right) that combined spans nearly 10,000 square feet. A 30-by-60-foot, hand-hewn threshing barn also is on the property.

The end game is to create a living, open-air museum which fthisocuses on farm life and technology of the late 1800s. Visitors will one day be able to view a period kitchen and hear the original family pump organ – now inside the Powers-Walker house. School groups will receive interactive lessons about farm tools that rely on levers, pulleys, screws, inclined planes, wedges and wheels to operate. The site's master plan recommends other lessons in canning, butter-making, woodworking and using alternative power sources such as wind and steam.

"Old World Wisconsin is what we are trying to emulate," Brown said. "But we need to stabilize structures and preserve it enough to do that."

Toward that end the district created the nonprofit McConnell Friends Foundation to support the preservation, restoration and operation of the farm. The annual maintenance costs, once the farm is operational and open to the public, are estimated at $28,000 a year.

"It's a matter of how much do you need and how much can you save," said Brown, who is restoring the 1870 Walter Winn farm in Spring Grove. "I grew up in old farmhouses. It's sort of reaching back to a part of my life I enjoyed."

Annual Meeting 2014

President's Report

Greg Barry will later recognize our outgoing board members as well as introduce the two people that we will ask you to elect as their replacements. But, at this time I would like to personally thank both Barry and Dave for their service to the Society over the past several years. We hope that they will continue their affiliation with MCHS.

Tonight we are also asking you to approve a by-law change that will allow us more flexibility as to the date of the annual meeting. The language currently requires us to conduct this meeting prior to the end of our fiscal year, which is June 30th. The board believes that approval of this by-law amendment will allow us to give you a more complete picture of our financial health.

Speaking of finances, I can report to you tonight that the condition of the McHenry County Historical Society is good. The Board at its May meeting again adopted a balanced budget that allows for both new initiatives and well deserved raises for our staff. Our investment portfolio is up due to both our prudent investment strategy and the careful management provided by the Northern Trust Bank of Chicago.

The heart of our mission as a historical society is the quality and variety of programs that we can offer to the public. With respect to this attribute, I can also report that the condition of your society is strong. We are continuing old programs and adding new ones. This spring's Sampler Series was the most successful in recent years. Three week-ends ago we partnered with MCC to provide a bus tour of our county's country schoolhouses and camps. Participants saw some amazing examples of preservation, restoration, and re-use. I am proud to report that the Haligus School will be receiving a county preservation award. This past week-end, Kurt again led a McHenry County team against some Grayslake upstarts in a game of old-time baseball. This coming week-end will inaugurate a program of Summer Sundays in the West Harmony schoolhouse. And, in 3 weeks we will again have the Heritage Fair – our chief fund raising event of the year.

During this past year we have become a recognized leader of the historic preservation movement in McHenry County. Without the structures that provide context, our vast collection of artifacts holds less meaning. Future generations will ask, "Where did this come from?" or "What did that building look like?" From Camp Algonquin in the east to the Sawyer-Kelley Mill in the south to the Harmony one-room school in the west, we are striving to see to it that our children and grandchildren may answer those questions for themselves. This is not an easy, or always popular (let alone, successful), endeavor. Powerful and well financed forces are often aligned against preservation.

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Nor is this a departure from our past. A few years ago we advocated –unsuccessfully - for the preservation of Grace Hall at the former Todd School in Woodstock.

Our committees have also been hard at work this past year. I just want to mention a few. The Strategic Planning Committee, under Lonnie Oldham's leadership, has assisted your society's other committees in setting their short and long range goals. Don Rose will talk more about the efforts of the Technology Committee, but I want to personally congratulate him and the other members for the great progress they have achieved this year. Our research library is first class for a museum of our size. The Library Committee, under Maggie Crane's leadership (and with the help of numerous volunteers), has endeavored to make it even better by culling duplicates and organizing the shelf and cabinet space. The Collections Committee, under Kira Halvey's direction, has also worked to reduce or eliminate duplicate items so that we do not burst from the seams. The Building and Landscaping committees, together with many volunteers, have worked to maintain and beautify our structures and grounds. Finally, the 50th Anniversary Committee met for over a year to plan a celebration and culminating dinner last November that proved a resounding success.

Without the commitment and hard work of hundreds of volunteers, these achievements of the past year would not have been possible. For example, Jan Knight and the Heritage Quilters come in every Wednesday to produce the beautiful quilt that we auction off at a November program. Your names are too numerous to mention, but on behalf of the Board of Directors, I again want to thank you all for what you do.

Finally, we need to recognize and thank our great staff. As I said last year, their job was made easier by the work of their predecessors – Nancy Irwin, Grace Moline, and Nancy Fike. Nancy Roozee has stepped in the last 15 months and managed – some might say juggled – the jobs of office manager, volunteer coordinator, secretary, and bookkeeper. Kira has again given us some great displays including this year's members' exhibit and the recently opened – and acclaimed - Don Peasley exhibit. Lastly, Kurt has managed the affairs of the society on a daily basis, encouraged us at every step, and coordinated all this activity in addition to taking on, among others, the Department of Transportation, the village of Union, various politicians, and some lawyers. And, somehow, he has managed to retain that smile and infectious laugh.

- Bob Frenz

Administrator's Report

Looking back on all we've accomplished in the past year, it hardly seems possible. Thank you for your commitment to this organization and to preserving your county's past. Thank you for hanging with me on this exciting ride – with all of the new faces, new challenges and new – sometimes old – ideas. This picnic is a case in point.

As board member Don Rose began researching the Society's history for our 50th anniversary program, we learned that this organization used to have picnics in the past that drew hundreds of people. So we took a little of our own advice and learned from the past.

Our 50th anniversary deserves a special mention. It culminated with a grand dinner last November in Harvard's Starline Factory that drew more than 200 people. Quite the shindig, by anyone's standard, and something that continues to live on our website. If you haven't seen the pictures yet, I highly recommend the snapshot of Bob and Chris Frenz in '60s formalwear!

"Party Girls" Marcia Lockwood, Mary Jane Shuring and Diane Urban – assisted ably by Nancy Roozée and Kira Halvey – also collaborated on an outstanding Members' Night in March and a great grand-opening party in May. On Aug. 12 we will be hosting another must-attend soirée: A Huntley Chamber of Commerce mixer from 5 to 7 p.m.

It all is part of a conscious effort to raise the organization's public profile and create a buzz. Toward that end we have adopted a sustained advertising campaign in two county focused magazines, an advertising partnership with the Illinois Railway Museum, added signage entering Union, history related columns in the Northwest Herald and Woodstock Independent, a regular rotation of timely press releases and a thriving Facebook page. It is our hope that all of this will drive traffic to the museum but also inspire people to join us and make a little a history.

Our efforts to save Harmony School and Camp Algonquin, which was named in April to the state's 10 Most Endangered List, certainly have gotten folks' attention in Springfield and locally. We have worked closely with Huntley Historic Preservation Commission to save what we can of the Sawyer-Kelly Mill in Huntley and we have remained in contact with those working to restore the Mineola Hotel in Fox Lake.

In three weeks we will be hosting our 29th annual Heritage Fair with our second antique car show. Last year 75 vehicles participated. This year, weather willing, we hope to hit the century mark. Other programs this year included: A bus tour of one-room schools and the 100-year-old Turner Camp led by our school expert Bob Frenz; our second Appraisal Day, a spirited Halloween haunting and a popular Sampler Series – including one program in the historic Trout Valley barn.

By the way, all four Sampler programs are expected to be available on DVD for the first time later this year, thanks to the efforts of Ken Fiske and Dean Rowe of Front Row Productions.

Other technological advances include the addition of a color copier machine and scanner that offers flexibility and cost savings on printing jobs and a large-format scanner in order to create a permanent record of our many scrapbooks – which time is turning into dust. We also are working to transform and modernize our website.

A digital quilted barn tour, made possible through a McHenry County Community Foundation grant and the assistance of the county's convention and visitor's bureau also should go live by July.

Technology also plays a prominent part of the new Don Peasley exhibit. Curator Kira Halvey, Don Rose and volunteer Mike Clark collaborated on a video montage that received rave reviews. More than 100 people attended the exhibit's opening in May.

For the record we accessioned 817 objects and photographs, plus another 834 Northwest Herald photographs. Our Library Committee, spearheaded by Maggie Crane, has worked to weed out duplicate and irrelevant materials from the stacks. Also, thanks to a grant from the community foundation, summer intern Paige Giacomo of Spring Grove has been sorting through our upstairs storage area, recording and logging each item.

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Annual Meeting 2014

The Historic Sites Committee has been very proactive to have a viable plaquing program. We have also turned our sights to downtown areas as well as more public venues such as theatres, a church and synagogue rather than only private residences. The committee has searched out sites that would be good candidates for plaques and worked hard in with both and pre- and post-follow-up. We sent out 9 "Hello" letters and 12 applications this year. Four applications were received, reviewed, had 3 on-site evaluations which passed the final evaluation went to the Board of Directors and were approved.

The 1929 El Tovar Theatre in Crystal Lake received MCHS's 85th Historic Site plaque on Feb.8, 2014.

Elmer Behrns was the architect for El Tovar as well as 8 other theatres in Illinois, including the Miller Theatre in Woodstock. During the 1920's, the era of Grand Palaces of Theatre when exotic styles were favored, the El Tovar was created in the Spanish Mission style. Much of the façade as well as the interior is still original. Tiles from local businesses, American Terra Cotta as well as Duntile were used on the façade. The mosaic floor was also created from American Terra Cotta tiles. Eight thousand people attended the grand opening in 1929 and the theatre has been an integral part of the community since its inception except for the period of restoration into the Raue Center for the Arts.

On May 3, 2014, we plaqued the 1901 George Burger House in Woodstock. This impressive Queen Anne house made a remarkable recovery after being a multi-family dwelling. It has all the hallmarks of a Queen Anne from the wraparound front porch, steeply pitched roof and irregular shape along with its asymmetrical footprint. A unique feature is its square bay with its multi-sided turret. The fish scale siding in the peaks and the beautiful beveled glass windows are other exceptional elements. It was built by Schneider and Clark. George Burger was a coal and implement dealer with community interests having served on the Woodstock Board of Education & was nominated as a Woodstock alderman for the north side.

At the April 28 board meeting, the board voted to approve the 87th plaque at St John the Baptist Catholic Church in Johnsburg. The plaquing will take place on June 29. Back in 1984, we only plaqued St. John's site as then it had not reached the requirement of 100 years of age. This is the 4th St. John's Church to be built on this site. After the tragic fire in 1901, this magnificent church was built. In the European Gothic style with its cruciform floor plan, 45 foot vaulted ceiling, 7 steeples and Gothic stained glass windows and rose window made in Germany, this church resonates the grand European cathedrals. The focal point of St. John's is located at the end of a long and wide approach, the sanctuary. The area in and around the sanctuary includes the beautifully ornate main altar and left and right flanking altars, all with colorful, and inspirational statuary. The altars and flanking confessionals were meticulously hand carved, stained and gilded in Germany, then reassembled in Johnsburg. Word has it that many of the parishioners, German immigrants helped build today's church.

The committee continues to have nine members. For our annual fieldtrip, the Historic Sites Committee went downtown on September 7, 2013 and did the Aqua Building tour with the Chicago Architectural Foundation. From there, we did the McCormick Bridgehouse & Chicago River Museum, finishing with our own walking tour of Chicago historic buildings. Those that attended had a great time. Another fieldtrip is being planned for September 2014.

This year on January 5th, the Historic Sites participated in an Open House reception or the William D. Hall House in Harvard with realtor, Jose Rey. On this bitterly cold day, we actually had good attendance and raised around $140.00 for the Society.

This past year our own Patrick T. King has graciously written these "Days Gone By" articles for the McHenry County Living magazine: "Seeing Stars at the Drive-In," "Sanfilippo's Sounds of the Past" and "WYEN Radio Retrospective." These articles not only serve to raise the awareness of history and preservation in the county but hopefully will encourage owners of historic places to apply for a MCHS plaque.

We have just finished re-vamping the Historic Sites Descriptive List digitally and also included the year each structure or site was plaqued. This was done in Word as well as Excel so that it can be put on the MCHS website and will be available for downloading. Also, please check out "Forgotten McHenry County" on the MCHS website, www.mchsonline.org. You can find it under Museum and then under Preservation in the menu bar. It documents remnants of our past, carriage houses, ghost ads on buildings, addresses in transoms, post offices no longer in existence, churches and schools now residences and outside cellar doors through slideshows. So far, it hasn't gotten a lot of play. We would like it to become more interactive with members and the public also contributing pictures. Pictures and their information can be sent to info@mchsonline.org.

In the coming year, we look forward to educating the general public and raising their consciousness of historic preservation while continuing to plaque new sites.

- Grace Moline

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While we have done our fair share of outreach, including 11 James bus appointments since April and 18 school visits involving some 900 students, many of our efforts the past year have been of a more introspective nature. Quite frankly, we had little choice. In order to position ourselves for the future we needed to take stock of where we are now.

Toward that end we have revitalized committees, studied the fees that we charge, taken our History Trunk out of mothballs, assessed the condition of the campus building roofs, installed an alarm system in West Harmony School for fire protection and to create potential rental space, purchased an easement alongside the Schuette Building and – with the help of volunteers – beautified the museum grounds with flowers and a new paint job in and around the staff entrance.

Finally, we've devoted time to self-assessment. The board agreed to conduct the organization's first financial audit later this year and expects to wrap up the better part of two years of meetings with the creation of a living, breathing strategic plan this summer. We have come a very long way in a very short time. And for that I sincerely thank my team, Kira Halvey and Nancy Roozée; our board and especially the many dedicated supporters and members who are critical to this organization's success.

At this time I'd like to recognize those volunteers who have died this past year. Many of these names will be familiar: Betty Anthony, Jane Collins, Arline Crawford, Jerry Draffkorn, Joseph Flippo, Robert Gerloff, Ed Guettler, Violet Haimbaugh, BJ Jones, Lisa Kelly, Robert G. Nelson, Patricia Nelson, Joyce Perkins, Jim Tonyan, Laurie Turner, Robert Zimmerman. Please join me in a moment of silence.

Thank you all for your expertise, your humor, even your applause (even while our baseball team was getting waxed 16-6 by the Grayslake Athletics on Saturday). You make my job interesting and fun. Every step we take underscores the importance of what we are doing and will continue to do. Thank you.

Featured object from our collection ...

By Kira Halvey

This medical bag, circa 1910, belonged to Dr. Horace Francis of Woodstock. It was a gift from his father, when Francis established his first medical practice in Woodstock.

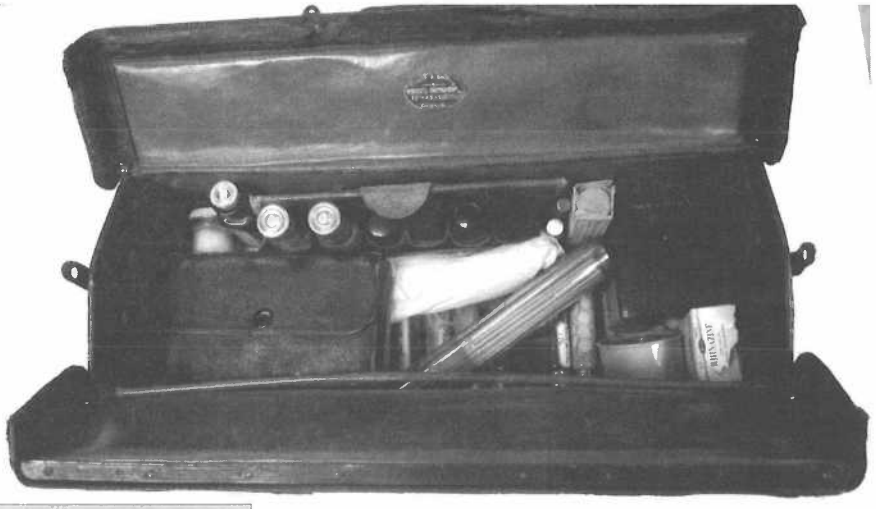
An ad in the 1914 Woodstock High School yearbook indicates that his office was located at 225 Benton St.

The contents of the medical bad included: Small medicine bottles, a plastic vial of tongue depressors, vial of cotton, two packages of gauze bandages, a roll of Johnson & Johnson adhesive plaster (tape), two dozen cotton swabs and a small vial of Dr. Hobbs Little Liver Pills.

By 1922 Dr. Francis was a director of the Woodstock Hospital, a forerunner to Memorial Hospital for McHenry County. The hospital was incorporated on Jan. 9, 1914. Prior to this date, it was operated as a private hospital by Dr. Hyde West and other Woodstock physicians on Clay Street. In 1915, the hospital moved to West South Street, to the home of Judge Theodore Murphy home (see photo). It could accommodate up to 15 patients.

The front of the building was changed and remodeled through the years. It was torn down in the late 1950s to make way for further hospital renovations.

Woodstock Hospital, circa 1915.



Annual Meeting 2014

In the 2013-14 membership year, we began offering a two-year membership. It proved to be a popular option – about one-third of our members have signed up for two years. (211) When renewing for this year, a few more people have taken the plunge and re-upped for two years this time.

We still have some wrinkles to iron out about when to mail schedules, etc., to two-year members, but it is a win-win option for both the member and the Society.

Final membership numbers for 2013-14 as of June 30 will be published as part of the annual membership report in the next Tracer.

- Kathy Bergan Schmidt

New span over Fox River

Three construction seasons and $88.5 million later, the Route 31/62 Western Bypass opened in September. In December 1933 the first traffic solution - a modern bridge - opened. The Woodstock Daily Sentinel described it this way:

"...There were those who believed a bridge farther to the south would fill the requirements better, but businessmen and those who have been instrumental in the growth of the village uttered so loud a protest that it was decided to place the new bridge near the old one."

Here's hoping this plan works better.

MCHS MEMBERSHIP REPORT
28 July 2014

TYPE	TOTAL	1 YEAR	2 YEAR
Business	3	3	
Family	48	23	25
Government	15	10 Municipal 5 Township	
Individual	35	15	20
Organization	6	6	
Senior	204	97	107
Senior Couple	133	53	80
Student	4	1	3
Life	60		
	505		

Overdue memberships as of July 24, 2014 = 136

Centenarian keeps making history

Meet Andreas Andreas and you've met one amazing woman who was far ahead of her time.

Born on an Algonquin farm 100 years ago, Andreas was the sixth of eight children and weighing in at 13 pounds.

"The doctor told her [my mother]: 'Well here is your little lady. You don't have a baby. You have a little lady right away.'"

And Andreas has been living larger than life ever since.

As a child, she walked to a one-room school about a mile away from her family farm off Hanson Road – no matter what the weather. She helped on the homestead by cooking, baking and doing chores that included picking black raspberries, and helping in the vegetable and flower gardens. When, as a young girl, she wanted a watch she raised her own chickens for money to buy one.

"I wanted a watch so bad in those days and of course that was unheard of. And everything was sent out of the catalog. Montgomery Ward or Sears, Roebuck," Andreas said. "I went out and fed my own chickens and in the fall of the year Pa went in to the meat market. Sure, they'd take the chickens. He helped me and they kept them down there. I forgot how much money I got, but I got enough for my watch. ...We were taught to work, and then we saved."

Married at the age of 18 after completing high school, she and her husband, Weldon, a teacher at the Ford School in Lake in the Hills, started a family and raised four children. Andreas also worked at a factory for 50 years, starting part-time after someone knocked on her door and requested that she come to work as a part of the war effort – even though a mother and homemaker working outside the home was frowned on at the time.

Now Andreas lives at McHenry Villa with her youngest daughter. She remains that cheerful and interesting woman; a mother, a grandmother and a great-grandmother of 24 with a busy calendar that includes visiting friends, attending family gathering and entertaining visitors.

Her best advice for a good life: Find some type of work to do and then do it!

Sue Richards
Tell Me a Story, Inc.

Richards: You've seen so much in your life You've been through wars; you've seen what happens. How do you feel just about life from your view of everything you've seen?

Andreas: I worked hard, but I've had a nice life, too. I enjoyed it. I don't know what to say. Oh, there were peaks and valleys sometimes but you worked things out. You gotta just sit down sometimes and think which way do I do this or that and it comes out. But I enjoyed cooking for the family and I did a lot of sewing in the Depression.

If you go through the Depression and you have the ambition to do it you've got a big garden and a big orchard and you always got something to eat. But you didn't have the fancy stuff to buy at the store like oranges or bananas.

We got oranges at Christmastime. Everybody would put their hand into their stock and in the toe there was an orange. That's about the only time we got an orange. Oh, we looked forward to that orange. I tell you. (laughs)

Richards: Have you been healthy all your life?
Andreas: I would say yes.

Richards: What do you attribute that to?

Andreas: Well, I would say work has a lot to do with it. I worked a lot but I didn't do the real heavy, heavy work. We always ate good, we had vegetables. ... Genes, too. Swedish people were healthy and strong and so were the Germans people. *(Six of the siblings lived to age 90 or older. Andreas turns 101 Nov. 14).*

Eunice Andreas

Richards: Tell me about your mother.

Andreas: My mother's name was Jenny Olson. She came at age 16 from the Malmö area in Sweden. It was a time when a lot of people came through Ellis Island. They heard it was better times and you could make better money in the United States. Immigration was great there for about four or five years.

Richards: Did you mother come with someone else?

Andreas: Yes, she had a girlfriend. In those days if they had a son they'd send the older son over first to see how it was before anybody else came. So her brother came and sent the word right away over that that you could get a job here and you were making pretty good money here.

Richards: What was your dad's name?
Andreas: Albert (Jocoman Frederick) Ebel.

Richards: Where did his family come from?
Andreas: Kietz, Germany.

Richards: When you look at that picture on the wall what do you remember about that farm? Was it a very special place to live?

Andreas: Yes, it was for all of our children. They really liked the homestead.

Duane Andreas (son): You know grandma liked us grandkids when we came home. She would say in the morning, "Now go out and pick me some apples," and we'd go out in the apple trees. ... We'd go up on those trees with our little colander and fill it up and at noon, oh my God, there would be those beautiful pies. Pie every day, almost.

Andreas: The pie crust was made from flour. In those days you rendered your own flour and butchered your own pigs. I think it was 2 cups of flour, ½ cup of lard, little salt, and you mixed it up with milk. You could tell by the consistency of the dough if you had enough moisture in it. The piecrust always was flaky and good. You rolled it out on a pastry board. My mother had a big wide one.

(Continued on page 8)

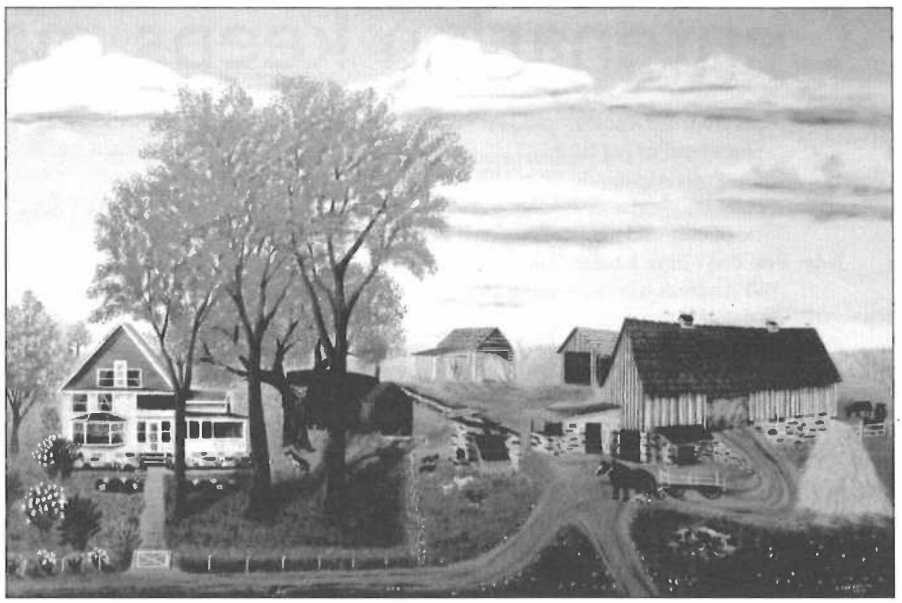
(Continued from page 7)

Richards: Was the cook stove gas or anything like that? Was it powered by firewood?

Andreas: Yeah, you could put wood or coal in there. Nice big oven. That cook stove made a lot of, lot of good things that come out of that oven.

Duane Andreas: Grandma always had cookies for us grandkids. In the kitchen there was a whole built-in wall of cabinets. In the dining room another wall of cabinets and these cabinets would be back to back. In the dining room you go through the kitchen door in the dining room in the lower left cabinet, in the lowest cabinet way down below there always was cookies there. We could go in and it would be a surprise what the latest cookie was.

Andreas: Rolled-out sugar cookies were her favorite.



Eunice Andreas' son-in-law, Andrew Smith, painted this picture (in color) in the 1970s of the Ebel family farm in Algonquin - based on his memories, those of his wife, Audrey, and her mother. The house portrayed is the second one 165-acre dairy farm.

Richards: Going back to the farm where you were born, tell me a little bit more about what life was like then.

Andreas: My mother always had a great big garden. Of course, she had to. We were a big family with eight siblings and my mother and dad. It was 10 and sometimes summertime before the boys were old enough to help he'd hire extra help. So my mother had to cook for 11 people every single day. She had a big garden and was a flower lover. As you entered her garden she had all kinds of flowers. So it really was inviting when you walked in there. It was really pretty.

Richards: And what kind of things did you grow and what kinds of flowers?

Andreas: Her favorite flower was one they called the Swedish plant. It actually did come from Sweden. Her next one she liked was cosmos, because they were a perennial and they would just grow by themselves along the way. ...Black raspberries bushes also grew wild and there were a lot of berries out there so that was my sister, Marian's, and my job to go out every two days to follow the fence lines and pick the berries. And we would come home with big pails full. Then my mother would make pies and the rest of it she'd just cook up like sauce and can it for the winter to eat.

Richards: What kind of jobs did you have, besides picking berries?

Andreas: Marian and I were kind of the tail end of the family. We were taught a lot of housework. And I had an older sister; she was the first one in the family so she did more outside work than Marian and I. I also had three brothers that were older so they were the ones that really helped, mostly outside. Butchering pigs was the worst day of the year. They would kill two of them at a time. Of course, my dad and the boys would have to hold the pigs and you could hear them squeal in the house. I would run upstairs and hide in the clothes closet for two hours (laughs). I did not like the squealing at all.

Richards: How long did you go to school and where did you go to school?

Andreas: I went to school in a country one-room school (Ford in Lake in the Hills). In those days you had all grades in one room. ... And we didn't live close to the school, either. I would say we lived about a mile away and we walked it every day – no matter how cold it was. You wore scarves and mittens, hat and boots. You were really dressed for it.

Richards: I know there's a big story around Ford School. I would love to hear it.

Andreas: When school closed we'd always have a picnic. Down in the woods. Every family brought something to eat. And that was the closing of the school. And at Christmastime, of course, they always had a program and that was up to the teacher to find a dialogue or a skit to put some kids in. Some could sing real good. They would have all that – almost an hour long program.

In those days they also had spelling contests. I think I was in about fifth or sixth grade. They started the first day of school when you had spelling every day. I had 100 in 100 days. I had those little cards and then at the end of the month they'd give you a card. But I turned them in to the Algonquin Historical Society.

Richards: How many children went to school on average when you went there?

Andreas: Oh, goodness! I think the enrollment a lot of times was up around 17 or 18 in that little room. In my own family we had about five go there at once. I went all eight grades – first straight through to eighth. All of our children from my oldest sister to the youngest ones they all went to that school.

Richards: What was it like first thing in the morning?

Andreas: There was a coal shed outside. So I guess it was the teacher's duty to bring in the coal in the coal scuttle. If there was an older boy like in seventh or eighth grade they would always go out and fill it up and see that it was full and bring it in the school.

Also in the morning two older boys would get water from a farmhouse about a quarter of a mile away. They would pump the water and bring it back. Inside we had an old-fashioned pail with a handle and the old-fashioned dipper. Each child had their own cup. If you wanted to drink you'd put it in the cup.

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

Richards: So after eighth grade then you went on to another school?

***Andreas**: I went four years at Dundee Community High School. We had to walk, almost a mile and a half from the farmhouse, to catch the bus. It cost 10 cents from Algonquin to Dundee down Route 12. That was back and forth. (Stay after school and it was a 5-mile hike through the woods to the farm.) ... Times are so different that it was back then, and you could trust.*

Richards: How many students were in your high school class at that time?

Andreas: I would say probably about 50.

Richards: Can you remember the time you saw your future husband? I'd like to hear a little about your courtship.

Andreas: I can remember the first day that he was there. I was wondering, "Oh my gosh, what is he going to look like or what. He was, I think, around 20.

Richards: So you were just curious as to what the new teacher rooming at your farmhouse was going to look like? Were you thinking possibly you might be interested in this person?

Andreas: Not at that time, no. It was right at the time my sister went to one year at Normal. Two years later I graduated from high school. I kind of wanted to go to a business school, more like for stenographer and typing. But that was when the Depression was really starting. So there was no money to send me. So I just kinda stayed home and helped my mother. Of course, she was getting older, too. She needed the help.

Richards: And when you met your husband and he boarded in your family's house he was not your interest at that time. But then what happened?

Andreas: Weldon taught at Ford School about seven years. *(Left in 1939 to teach in Ringwood School.)* Then we got married after that, just before they closed the school (1942). In those days, the Depression, there was no money for a wedding. We just went off and got married by a justice of the peace.

Richards: Where did you start your life together?

Andreas: Actually, we started our life together in the house where the Ford School was. That is when we lived in the [George] Sticklemeyer house. *(Sticklemeyer bought the 1886 school and moved it to his farm in 1945 – three years after it closed. In 2012 it was returned from Stonegate Nursery, at 2001 W. Algonquin Road, back to original location off Ramble Road in Lake in the Hills.)*

Richards: How long did you live in that house?

Andreas: A fellow that owned a hotel in Chicago was the one that came out and bought that little farm. He raised chickens. One night while we were in bed – I can hear them yet – I thought, 'Who's talking outside?' About a block and a half there was a fence line and if you came down this way that's where the chicken house was. I looked out the window and there were two men following that fence. In those days that was a big thing with farmers; they did steal chickens. I got up and looked out and came down and I could see them right by the chicken house. There was a door on the back. I called my husband and he loved to hunt, so he had his hunting gun there. ...He shot in the air. That must have scared them because they crawled through the window and they left the bags. They didn't get any chickens.

Richards: Tell me about your job.

Andreas: They were drafting all the men so there wasn't enough men to even go in the factories to work. And there was a chemical factory that moved into the old Bowman milk bottling plant. They were going house to house, canvassing the neighborhood to see if they could get any women to work. That was the period, years ago if you had a family and went to work that was looked down upon.

Anyway, they stopped at my place. The kids were all at school and I was in the Victory garden, working. They said they were looking for workers, the just couldn't find any. They didn't care if you worked eight hours, four hours or three – just so you could come in and help. So I said, well I've got three little kids yet and my husband wasn't home. So I said I'd have to think about this. They said, 'We'll be back Monday,' and they were back.

I said I would try it for four hours in the afternoon. Then I'd be home to get everybody off to school and everything. So I tried it for four hours and they said if you could work another hour you could do that, too. ... I wanted a refrigerator so I was only going to work long enough to get the refrigerator. Well, it took me a while to save enough money to get the refrigerator. Then it come down to I was cooking on an old-fashioned kerosene stove. I thought, well, it would be nice to have a different stove. (laughs) And that's how it just kept going..

To begin with I worked in the photo department. And that was heavy work. In photo you make the refreshment and developer and the hardener in developing film and, of course, they used an awful lot of that in the war. They were always taking pictures. I don't know I worked in that department I think about four or five years. Then my youngest daughter she came along. (laughs)

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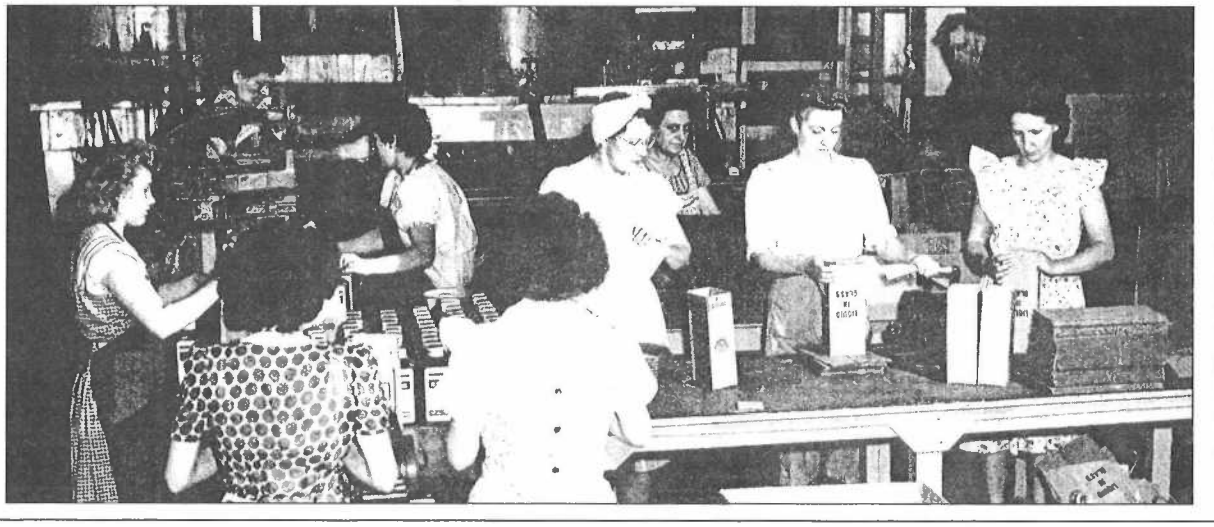


Eunice Andreas (right) began work at the Ringwood Chemical Corp. plant in 1942 as a part of the war effort and because she wanted to earn money for a stove and a refrigerator. She wound up working there 50 years, much of it as a chemical analyst in the control lab.

(Continued from page 9)

Richards: How old was she?

Andreas: That was 16 ½ years later.

Richards: You must have worked 16-hour days, plus your job. How did you do that?

Andreas: It was there, had to be done and I'd just do it. (laughs)

Duane Andreas: She would walk to work, maybe four blocks in the morning, walk back at noon and walk back again, walk back home. Then she had three kids in high school.

Richards: Did you just take it all in stride?

Andreas: Sure. I was happy.

Richards: And you would tell me that secret behind being happy in a life that you have to work so hard in.

Andreas: Well, my husband was a teacher. In those days when teachers taught they only had to have one year of college. Of course as years progressed they wanted teachers to have more education but he would not go back and further his education. So his salary always stayed the same. As the family grew older they wanted...I always wanted them to go to college. I thought, well then it's up to me to go to work. That's how it all started.

Richards: If you were to advise people on how to have a good life like you have what kind of advice would you give someone?

Andreas: First of all you've got to have a lot of patience, a lot of love. I would definitely teach them to start out a little on how to work. You're not going to succeed in life if you don't do some kind of a work. If it's light, medium, heavy or whatever or whatever career you want. Don't expect when you get out in the world that you think you're going to go to the top right away. We've got some in our own family that think that. They don't want to start from the bottom. Work yourselves up. That's what you've got to do.

And the patience. I've had patience. A lot of times some people they'll start things and they'll get so far and it don't go quite right. "Oh, I don't want to do that! That's too much!" Well, stick with it. It'll work out and you go on. … I've had a nice life.

Annual Meeting 2014

Treasurer's Report

The Society's financial growth continues to be positive. Our U.S. economy has been steady for the past year and our Northern Trust asset managers have used this situation to grow our portfolios and produce the moderate income we need to support our operating budget. The Dorothy McEachren Trust Fund and the McHenry County Historical Society Endowment Fund are special irrevocable Charitable Remainder Unitrusts. On December 31st of each year, a modest fixed percentage rate of 3.5 and 4% of their valuation is used to determine how much money we will receive in distributions each month. Starting July 1st, our combined distributions from both funds will increase by $603.00 monthly ($7,241.48 annual). Please refer to Chart A for current valuations of all our liquid assets

The Finance Committee has prepared a new budget for Fiscal Year 2014-2015 and it was approved at the May Board of Directors meeting. You will find a copy attached to this report. The new budget is modest in scope, reflecting typical cost-of-doing-business increases from our suppliers for items like electricity, postage and office supplies. Salaries for office staff were increased by 3%. There are no new major fundraisers planned for this season like last fall's 50th Anniversary Celebration. We anticipate generating similar incomes from our fundraising events and programs. As you can see, it will be possible to generate a net income of $5,647.62. We are very lucky to be able to produce a positive income after expenses and not having any debt is also an indication of sound financial management by the Board of Directors.

We have also been very fortunate to receive two grants from the McHenry County Community Foundation which have been included in the new budget. One grant for over $5,000 will allow us to hire an intern to work in the cold storage collections to organize and create some much needed space to allow for additional acquisitions. The grant also allows for the purchase of a scanner and camera to complete this collections work. The second grant is $4,000 and this money is designated to be used for the installation of a larger overhead door in the Schuette Building. The new door is needed to facilitate safer parking of The James traveling history bus in its garage. During the construction work a people door will be added to provide another exit from the Schuette building which was recommended by the Union Fire Department.

CHART A

Operating Fund	May 31, 2013	May 31, 2014
Primary Checking Account	$ 18,246.85	$ 23,297.07
Operational Savings Account	$ 86,983.49	$ 70,203.03
Northern Trust Endowment Fund	$ 1,761,255.36	$ 1,920,475.43
Northern Trust McEachren Trust	$ 3,517,182.53	$ 3,780,119.02
Online Checking Account	$ 2,523.39	$ 9,023.39
PayPal Account	$ 1,029.43	$ 1,592.64
Totals	$ 5,387,221.05	$ 5,804,710.58

Chart A shows a comparison of our total liquid assets for May 2013 and May 2014. These figures are obtained from a fund balances report prepared for review by the Board of Directors at each monthly meeting.

Our fundraising programs and events continue to support our mission, pay our bills, maintain our buildings, keep up with technology, and build new exhibits. We continue to evaluate how these programs can be improved to generate more income or bring more people to our museum. It should be noted that although the museum might be considered "seasonal" because of opening in spring and closing in the fall, we intentionally offer events year round such as the quilt program in November, the Holiday Open House in December, the winter Utility Fund drive, Appraisals Day in February and Sampler Series starting in March. This strategy keeps our cash flow more consistent and predictable

Looking into the future, the Board of Directors has undertaken the task of creating a Strategic Plan. This comprehensive plan will map our direction for areas such as marketing, technology, membership, expansion, staff and programs. Our income will need to increase in proportion to our future ideas and/or a capital campaign will need to take place to fund remodeling, additions or permanent staff additions. Growing our Endowment Fund will be important to implementing our ideas.

The Society's present financial picture looks healthy and our future looks exciting. We encourage our membership to play an active part in the Society. Let us know how you think the McHenry County Historical Society should look and what you would like to see us doing in the coming years. Share your ideas and we will be happy to answer any questions you may have or supply more details about our financial standings.

- Dan Ring, Assistant Treasurer
Nancy Roozée

CHART B

FY 2012- 2013		FY 2013- 2014 *6/23/2014*
$ 17,718	Membership	$ 24,692
$ 993	Admissions	$ 1,443
$ 13,084	Donations	$ 5,189
$ 13,154	Memorials/Bequests	$ 4,570
$ 10,583	Heritage Fair/White Elephant Sale	$ 9,395
$ 1,004	Used Books	$ 1,441
$ 2,117	Cider Fest	$ 897
$ 4,132	Quilt Raffle	$ 4,425
$ 2,067	Sampler Series	$ 2,174
$ 13,605	Utility Fund	$ 12,421
$ 496	County Fair	$ 900
$ 1,044	Autumn Drive	$ 1,253
$ 3,684	Gift Shop	$ 3,162
$ 545	Appraisals Day	$ 511

Chart B shows the net income results of most of our major fund raising efforts.

Recent donations to the library

• Illinois County Landownership Map and Atlas Bibliography and Union List. Compiled by Michael P. Gnzen, James R. Akerman and David T. Thackery; Springfield, IL Illinois Board of Higher Education. Circa 1991

• Woodstock: The Four Seasons. Edited and text by Marla Gamze-Pendergrast. Forward by Don Peasley. Crystal Lake, IL: Robin F. Pendergrast Photography, Inc. Circa 2009.

• Kishwaukee School District Nos. 7 and 24. District School Record. (Notebook of meeting reports, teacher lists, etc.)

• Surveyor's Notes – Algonquin Township, 1837-39. Copied from McHenry County Conservation District. Compiled by William B. Nichols.

• McHenry County Historical Society Historic Sites Committee. Notebook of news clippings, photos, etc. from 1991-2014.

• McHenry County Retired Teachers Association directory. Library has 1989; 1991-96 and 2002-11.

• Copy book by Martha Holly. Printed source materials copied by an unmarried young woman, possibly Martha Holly Millard, wife of Crystal Lake pastor the Rev. N.A. Millard.

• The Search for Mary Dunham (Collson) Brigham's Ancestors. Written by Bruce Gethen and researched by Kenneth Allen.

• St. John Nepomucene Catholic Church, Fox River Grove. Notebook submitted by Judithy Kosatka Lovaas containing early baptism records, cemetery index and obituary index. 1867-1967.

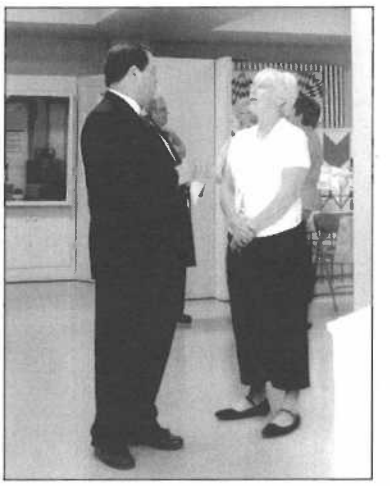
• Provisional Drill and Service Regulations for Field Artillery (horse and light), 1916. Military Publishing Co., New York, 1917.

• A New Atlas of he World, corrected according to the peace terms and featuring a graphic story of the Great War, 1914-19. New York: Frank F. Levell, circa 1919.

• Land Ownership Maps: A Checklist of the 19th Century United States County Maps in the Library of Congress. Compiled by Richard W. Stephenson. Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 1967.

• The Great War. A.E. Hadl. No date.

• McHenry County Rural Resident Directory. Library has 1977, 1980.



Mary Jane Schuring (right) talks with Sheldon Clark at the Huntley Chamber mixer in August at the museum..

Why **do** subdivision histories?

The story of Sha-Li-Mar

When I was growing up in McHenry in the late 1940s, and throughout the 1950s, especially when I was young , Country Club Subdivision defined the boundaries of my whole world.

All my closest friends were neighbors. We played baseball in Blake's lot, hunted for golf balls along the fringes of the golf course that nestled into and alongside the subdivision , and spent our summer days swimming and fishing in the Fox River – the eastern boundary of our world.

I liked to think that I was the only one who knew the best spots to pick wild strawberries, black raspberries and asparagus.

Imaginations were in full swing at that stage in our lives. Just as with Jem, Scout and Dill – characters in Harper Lee's "To Kill A Mockingbird" – we had our version of the old Boo Radley house: Chester Goodman's 1890s spooky Victorian. It was a given that you moved to the opposite side of the street when walking past.

Our subdivision, its setting, and the relationships that thrived between neighbors, both young and old, cocooned us into a community in every sense of its meaning.

All the towns and cities of McHenry County are rich with stories just like mine. These stories and the histories of these special places need to be written and shared. Subdivisions and neighborhoods like these visually define a municipality's "character" and built environment. Physically and architecturally they represent solid evidence of days gone by.

Closest to the central town core, large lots with mature trees and maturing housing styles speak to that period in history when farmers began moving off the farm and into town; when rail and roads made acquiring building materials and goods easier. Growth and buying power expanded to the point where places like Algonquin and Harvard developed the architectural landscapes that still define much of their physical appearances today.

By the 1920s, electricity and the modern appliances that developed because of it – along with increased leisure time and better communications – ushered in subdivisions developed for their access to recreational sites like the Fox River and golf courses. It was in these place that bungalows, those compact horizontal structures, ruled.

(Continued on page 13)

Mystery Photo

Illinois Gov. Otto Kerner (right) was among the dignitaries that used such mobile phone trailers following the Palm Sunday tornado of 1965 in Crystal Lake. The tornado killed six and destroyed or damaged more than 150 homes - many of them in the Colby subdivision.

Our next Mystery Photo: These business leaders are gathered in Woodstock promoting a particular charity. Name that charity. Bonus points for identifying the venue. The year is 1948.

(Continued from page 12)

And when World War II veterans returned home, it was to "ranch" style houses built in great numbers in new subdivisions needed quickly for such growth. All this physical evidence exists because these identifying legacy subdivisions and neighborhoods remain.

It is not nostalgia alone that should fuel public interest in them. They should continue to be an important part of any future land-use planning undertaken in our municipalities. Among other things, they contribute: Architectural styles that offer affordable housing and visual diversity, mature landscaping, links to a city's identifiable past and progress, community stability underscored by "pride in place," transportation, recreational features, schools, libraries and locational amenities that include close access to "town."

So why chronicle subdivision history? My hope is that increased awareness will protect these jewels from the tear-down trend and illuminate their contributions to local history. I want to ensure that the very factors that make them so appealing as places to live, won't also make them targets for destruction.

If cities like McHenry want to such unique neighborhoods to survive, they need to take specific steps such as:

Signage at the entryway to legacy subdivisions spotlights and raises public awareness that these are "special" places.

Provide for exemptions from road standards that require removal of historic features, both natural and manmade, before township and/or city maintenance "kicks in."

Adopt ordinances that discourage tear-downs.

Provide restoration incentives for the preservation of historic homes and other structures within these designated areas.

With this in mind, a short history of Sha-li-mar Subdivision in McHenry follows. Thanks to Mary Condon, historical society member and my high school classmate, for typing this up. Thank goodness for technology and even more thanks to those like Mary who know how to use it easily.

– Nancy J. Fike

Country Club Subdivision resident, McHenry

Sha-li-Mar (beautiful garden) Subdivision, 1927

At the turn of the 20th century, developmental transportation and communication advances began having long-lasting influences on McHenry County and its communities. This was particularly true for villages like McHenry which are located along the Fox River..

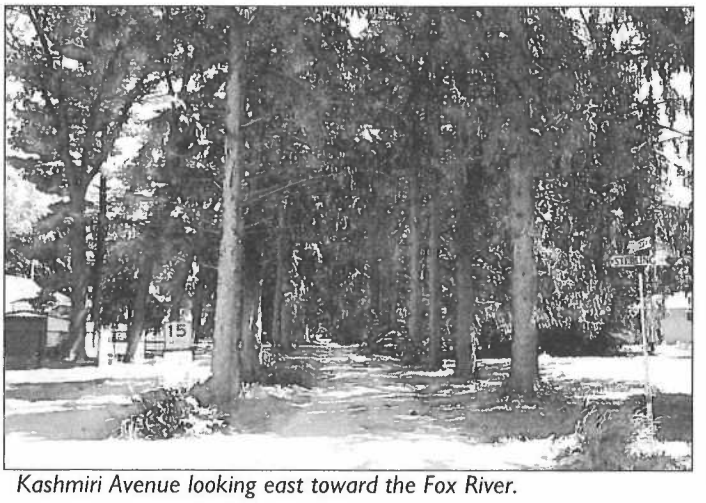
Convenient train schedules, livery stables and hotels located in close proximity to depots, increased leisure time in general, telephone and boosterism newspapers cleared the way for those living in population centers like Chicago to easily reach scenic and more rural areas like McHenry. Auto usage and hard roads added to the trend.

The village "fathers" (McHenry would not become a city until 1923), along with the business community, saw great economic potential in having these vacationers spend their time and money here. Even into the mid-1950s, McHenry's population boomed during the summer months until Labor Day signaled the return to quieter days when summer residents closed up their cottages and left once again for Chicago schools and permanent homes.

During this summer-winter cycle, a number of Fox River waterfront subdivisions like Sha-Li-Mar were developed. Located in the southwest quarter of section 24, range 8 of McHenry Township, this subdivision consisted of some 100 lots on five blocks. Block two was comprised of 13 riverfront lots and one other lot located between lots three and four, designated as a beach lot for the use of the remaining non-riverfront lot owners.

Subdivision owners, Bruce and Emma Stirling, worked through veteran real estate developer, Roy Kent of Kent & Co., to promote and sell lots beginning in 1927. The first notice of the new subdivision was published Aug. 18, 1927, in the McHenry Plaindealer newspaper.

In that account, it was reported that Sha-Li-Mar – supposedly an East Indian word meaning "beautiful garden," was the name chosen by Bruce A. Stirling, a Wilmette and Chicago summer resident who recently purchased Howell's Villa near Chapel Hill Country Club (east side of Fox River). Stirling's new subdivision was to be located on the grounds of what once was Dr. Carl Strueh's Orchard Beach Sanatorium. The sanatorium sat on 23 acres on the west side of the Fox River.



Kashmiri Avenue looking east toward the Fox River.

Stirling also had holdings in Deerfield. The Aug. 25, 1927, edition of the Plaindealer notes that 34 lots sold quickly and that sales were restricted to "people in comfortable circumstances and high class character and its list of owners will read like the Social Register."

By code, the subdivision was for "gentiles only." There were many such early 20th century restricted subdivisions in McHenry County.The site that Kent & Co. developed as Sha-Li-Mar had an interesting history. The 1892 plat map of McHenry Township shows a parcel on that site consisting of 46.39 acres belonging to A.L. Howe. Included within it is what is now Orchard Beach Subdivision. Sometime after 1892 and before 1908, Chicago resident August Larsen bought a strip of Howe's land and laid out Orchard Beach. Most of those lots were sold to fellow Chicagoans for summer cottages.

Larson was manager of the Rosedale Pleasure Club in Howe's original home. It became known as the Orchard Beach Hotel. Still standing today, this structure is a private residence located at 1812 N. Riverside Drive in McHenry.

(Continued on page 14)

Promotional brochures produced by Kent & Co. in 1927 show the original Shalimar Subdivision as consisting of Kashmiri and Kama avenues and Stirling and Embruce drives, between Kama and Kashmiri along the river. The name Embruce is a combination of Bruce and Emma Stirling, the developers. The former Embruce Drive now is a continuation of Orchard Beach Road.

There was a 1st Addition to Shalimar consisting of Henzada Avenue which added additional lots north and south of that street. McHenry contractor, Fred Karls, often is mentioned as a homebuilder in both the Shalimar and Orchard Beach subdivisions. The remaining bungalows in these subdivisions date to the first homes built. They continue to represent McHenry's architectural history and offer variety both in housing stock and community character.

According to the original subdivision plat map filed with the county on Sept. 20, 1927, no dwellings in Shalimar were to cost less than $1,500 in Blocks 1 and 5. Homes built in Blocks 2 and 4 had to have a value of at least $2,500 and in Block 3 which fronted along the Fox River, homes would have a minimum value of $5,000 – close to $66,000 in today's money. The subdivision beach lot is still located in block three.

(Continued from page 13)

Orchard Beach Sanitorium

About 1906, Dr. Carl Strueh and his wife, Anna, came to the McHenry area and bought property in this new subdivision. Born in Germany in 1861, Strueh received his medical training at universities in Gottingen, Zurich and Manchen, Germany. He was a member of the Chicago Medical Society, the Illinois Medical Society and the American & German Medical Society. According to "Vegetarian Magazine" (no date pre-1920), Strueh had been in general practice in Chicgo since 1886.

He opened a Kneipp Cure Sanatorium in Chicago at 464 Belden Ave. in 1892. Strueh's plans for his 20-acre Orchard Beach Sanatorium in McHenry followed the late 19th and early 20th century medical philosophy for the treatment of "obstinate" respiratory-like tuberculosis diseases by natural means. According to medical thinking at that time, open-air spaces, sunshine and fresh air were the "ticket" for treating the maladies of the day.

According to newspaper accounts of the day, Strueh's health resort was popular and busy. According to a booklet produced in 1913 which included half-tone photos of the sanatorium and other sites in McHenry, the sanatorium was nationally known. Many improvements were made to the grounds which were landscaped with nearly every kind of tree that would grow in northeastern Illinois. Years later when Kent & Co. (Kent Corp.) marketed the site as Sha-Li-Mar Subdivision, it boasted that all lots were wooded. Today, a drive along Kashmiri Avenue in Sha-Li-Mar with the pines hugging the roadsides provides historical evidence of Dr. Strueh's efforts.

At the entrance to the sanatorium stood high cement pillars with a tapering wooden side fence section on each side. The June 8, 1916, Plaindealer contains a good photo of the former entryway.

In magazine ads promoting Strueh's McHenry area sanatorium, McHenry is described as a picturesque little town of 2,000 inhabitants. "No spot on this globe which can boast of purer and more invigorating air than this section of Illinois," read the ad in Vegetarian Magazine. Patients of Orchard Beach Sanatorium adopted an exclusively vegetarian diet, wore no shoes other than sandals and took daily exercise in the Air Park and Open Air Gymnasium.

Accommodations were provided in rows of cottages with screens open to the fresh air along with separate dormitories for men and women. Some of those cottages remain along the south side of Kashmiri, where small cottages were combined to make larger homes. The original waterfront dining hall still stands at 2502 Orchard Beach Drive as a large privately owned summer home.

While there has talk over the years that the sanatorium actually housed a nudist colony, nothing was ever printed in the McHenry Plaindealer to that effect. The closest reference came from the Feb. 23, 1936, "Old Timers" Plaindealer column (McHenry celebrated its centennial in that year) where a correspondent told of Strueh's sanatorium up the river. Patients and staff believed that sunlight and fresh air had restorative powers. Supposedly sanatorium patients came to town scantily dressed and the police officer told them to go back and put on more clothes before returning.

Besides operating his sanatorium, Dr. Strueh took an active interest in the comings and goings of McHenry life, sometime taking to task the appearance of local businesses. He believed the community could be improved upon by using the river to attract more people. Some things he suggested seem appropriate today: Use a river weed cutter, put mufflers on loud boats, and beautify the railroad station and grounds. Along those lines, he urged that a train leave at 5:30 or 6 p.m. from Chicago, so that businessmen could get out to McHenry after the work day. He even chided the village for not cleaning up its park (Veterans Park on Pearl Street).

In 1915, during the years that Orchard Beach Sanatorium was thriving, a golf course was built within Orchard Beach Subdivision.

Strueh's Orchard Beach Sanatorium operated from 1907 to 1926 when Carl Strueh died suddenly at age 65 in a garden on the grounds. His wife, who was listed in various real estate transactions as living in Shalimar Subdivision, left the area sometime in the late 1930s. She died Jan. 27, 1948 at Roosevelt Hospital in New York City.

The sanatorium site and grounds then entered the next phase of development as a summer home river subdivision typical of McHenry's pre-World War II growth. Other such subdivisions included Woodland Park, Emerald Park, Clement Lodge Subdivision, Hunterville Park (named after Everett Hunter, McHenry's premier Boat Company owner) Oakhurst Subdivision on the east side of the Fox River, and the Orchard Beach and McHenry Country Club subdivisions on the west side.

In 1931, the mostly summer residents of Shalimar incorporated a Shalimar Improvement Association (see attached). As stated in its incorporation papers, the association was formed to keep the parkway roads, what appears to be mulberry trees and beach facilities in good condition for and on behalf of the association members as lot owners in Shalimar.

Records of the association are sketchy and somewhat incomplete for much of the early years. It appears, though, from records dating to 1940, that there were at least two yearly meetings: One at the beginning of the summer season and one at the end. There also was day dedicated to cleaning up the beach.

Members also often put in work days on the roads. At a July 28, 1940, meeting the members voted to have a 1/8th barrel of beer at each meeting – a tradition followed for many years. At that same meeting, new bench signs were authorized which stated, "Restricted Property Gentiles Only." Association dues at that time were $5. By 1975 dues climbed to $30 a lot and by 2000 they had reached $95 a year.

While beach maintenance generally can be handled by residents, that was not the case for the roads. This continues to be the subdivision's major expense.

Road improvements including serious efforts to turn over road maintenance to McHenry Township continues to dominate private subdivision meetings. But the expense of bringing older subdivision roads up to a standard required by the township remains daunting. Built in the 1920s, their roads generally are narrow and wind along landscapes that include mature trees and period pillars and fences. The loss of such identifiable features make it a difficult trade-off.

Areas like Shalimar Subdivision contribute not only to McHenry's historic identity as 20th Century Chicago summer resort and cottage destinations, but also act as a resource for varied housing stock and "colorful" architectural styles. Following the end of World War II homebuilders Johnson & Williams provided G.I. Bill financed homes for sale in Shalimar. Mature landscaping is another positive contribution of historic subdivisions and neighborhoods, as is their proximity to the city center and natural resources like the Fox River.

Subdivisions like Shalimar attracted well-known individuals like internationally known opera star, Mark I. Oster, who performed with the Chicago Civic Opera. Chicago Chicago businessman, Mr. Sunde, owner of the Annabelle Lorraine Dress Shops, also built a summer homes here. Many fascinating human stories are connected with these older neighborhoods.

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Tracer, the quarterly newsletter of the

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